



Establishing MRCs in Vermont

The Vermont Department of Health (VDH) is the lead agency to provide guidance and support to current and future Medical Reserve Corps Unit within the state.

It is understood that the MRC program/initiative is a local resource with a mission that aligns with the national MRC mission to improve the health and safety of communities across the country by organizing and utilizing public health, medical and other volunteers. The concept of regionalization of MRCs will enhance each region's collective capacity to share resources, and to respond to public health threats and emergencies. Integrating the MRC mission with community initiatives can simplify and facilitate effective communication within a unit and strengthen coordination of limited resources.

VDH will provide the national MRC office with a recommendation for each application for federal recognition as a Vermont unit. Each application will be reviewed on a case by case basis.

Prior to making its recommendation to the national office, the VDH MRC State Coordinator will meet with the applicant unit and review the application based on the following:

- Mission and vision for the applicant unit's ongoing development and sustainability.
- Statement of reason for seeking recognition if the applicant is within an existing regional or multi-community MRC, including a statement as to why the existing MRC does not meet the community's needs.
- Unit should have access to necessary assets:
 - ✓ Large and representative membership, including MRC volunteers and the sponsoring or advisory group;
 - ✓ Ongoing recruitment program, with a focus on specialty expertise (physicians, nurses, pharmacists, public safety, emergency management, logistical support, etc);
 - ✓ Community base of operations, that includes a focus on public health;
 - ✓ Internal organization set up to track and update volunteer and partner information;
 - ✓ Internal policies and Standard Operating Procedures in place or under development;
 - ✓ Process for background checks;
 - ✓ Process for verifying and badging volunteers;
 - ✓ Use the VERV Registry System; and
 - ✓ Implement a training program that matches MRC core competencies.
- Plan for development of monetary resources and donations.
- Plan for and assurance of ongoing collaboration with overlapping and contiguous MRC units, including plans for working jointly with neighboring communities.

At a minimum, a unit needs the following to apply for recognition: an Advisory Council, Housing/Sponsor organization and a unit director/coordinator. It would be expected that once the unit is federally recognized (about a four week process) then the unit will be working on building its unit's SOPs, planning documents, recruitment and training activities and other unit standards as determined.